



OPENING STATEMENT

H.E. Workneh Gebeyehu, IGAD Executive Secretary

5th Regional Migration Fund (RMF) Project Steering Committee Meeting

18th November 2025 | Djibouti

- Madam **Yasmine Djama Ibrahim**, Deputy Director, Regional Organizations at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of Djibouti,
- Distinguished **Directors-General, Commissioners, and Representatives of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs** of IGAD Member States,
- **Mrs. Julia Hannig**, Head of East Africa Division, German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), - **Joining Online**
- **Dr. Martin Knoll**, representing Governance & Stabilization for Eastern Africa and the African Union at KfW,
- Representatives of **RMF Implementing Partners**,
- **IGAD Colleagues**,
- **Ladies and Gentlemen**,

Good morning,

1. It is my distinct honour to welcome you to Djibouti for the 5th Annual Steering Committee Meeting of the Regional Migration Fund. Allow me to begin by thanking our host Government and people of Djibouti for their gracious hospitality, and our German partners, BMZ, KfW and GIZ, for your steadfast commitment to this shared endeavour.
2. Your presence affirms our collective resolve to strengthen cooperation and advance sustainable solutions to the region's migration and displacement challenges.



3. Across the IGAD region, mobility continues to shape our political, economic and social landscape. Our Member States are countries of origin, transit and destination at the same time, managing both regular and irregular flows alongside long-standing refugee populations.
4. These pressures are intensifying and increasingly require not only humanitarian responses, but durable, development-oriented approaches anchored in responsibility-sharing and regional solidarity. This is precisely the purpose of the Regional Migration Fund.
5. The RMF has grown into one of IGAD's most practical instruments for translating policy vision into concrete impact. It brings services, opportunities and infrastructure directly to communities along migration routes, communities often far from capital cities and underserved by traditional development programmes. It strengthens coordination, clarifies roles and embeds monitoring systems that ensure results are both measurable and meaningful.
6. Over the last 18 months, the RMF underwent a comprehensive review of its implementation model. This review, conducted jointly with BMZ and KfW, identified the need for clearer responsibilities, stronger technical oversight, and greater efficiency in delivering complex, high-value infrastructure.
7. These consultations culminated in the signing of a Revised Separate Agreement in July 2025, together with a 8 million Euros Financial Cooperation Agreement marking the start of the 4th Phase.



8. Germany's most generous additional 16 million Euros commitment announced in October 2025 is further testament to the strength of this partnership and the credibility of the Fund's achievements to date. This renewed support reflects a shared vision: a region that is resilient, economically interconnected and capable of managing mobility humanely and effectively.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

9. Let me turn to progress on the ground; progress that is visible, measurable and transformative. In Djibouti's Ali-Sabieh region, significant milestones have been achieved. The rehabilitation and expansion of the Technical School (*Lycée Technique*) is complete, including new classrooms, dormitories, workshops and administrative facilities.
10. This upgrade increases capacity by **200 additional students**, many of whom come from refugee communities. It is an investment in skills, dignity and opportunities for young people who urgently need them.
11. The Community Development Centre in Ali-Addeh, another shared facility for refugees and the host community is now complete and awaiting final furnishing. Once operational, it will support youth training, social cohesion and community governance.
12. Equally encouraging is the near-completion of two new market centres in Ali-Sabieh and Ali-Addeh, both now **78% complete**. These markets will formalize informal commerce, expand livelihood opportunities and stimulate local economies.



13. During the construction phase, **over 350 people**, both refugees and host community members, found temporary employment, strengthening household incomes and fostering cooperation between communities.
14. Beyond Djibouti, the RMF's expansion into Nimule–Elegu in 2024 marked an important step in scaling cross-border development. In this vibrant corridor between Uganda and South Sudan, participatory assessments have produced Area-Based Development Strategies, reflecting community priorities across WASH, flood management, skills development and markets.
15. Meanwhile, in Moyale and Tog-Wajale, detailed feasibility studies, socio-economic analyses and operational and maintenance plans are now in place, paving the way for abattoirs, livestock markets, water systems and other high-impact investments.
16. These efforts were made possible by Member State commitments such as providing land, permits, roads, water and electricity to ensure that infrastructure is viable and sustainable.
17. Of course, dear colleagues, no programme of this scale is immune to challenges. Security incidents in some areas, global inflation driving up construction costs, capacity limitations among certain partners, and procedural complexities have affected timelines.



18. Yet across the region, we have seen the resilience of this programme reinforced by stronger coordination, adaptive planning and unwavering political support. IGAD remains committed to fast-tracking decisions, enhancing technical oversight and delegating responsibilities appropriately to ensure timely delivery in line with the Financing Agreement.
19. As I come to the conclusion of my remarks, allow me to express our deep appreciation to the Government of Germany for its strategic partnership, which has been central to the RMF's impact.
20. We also thank the Government of Djibouti for hosting this project, its leadership as Chair and its generous support in hosting this meeting. Finally, we recognize the commitment of all IGAD Member States, whose ownership remains the foundation of the RMF's credibility and sustainability.
21. As we launch into our deliberations, let us reaffirm our shared commitment to the principles that underpin the RMF, partnership, solidarity and regional cooperation.
22. Let us use this meeting to inspire fresh ideas, strengthen collaboration and accelerate the delivery of results that create opportunities, expand resilience and promote prosperity for the communities we serve.

Thank you one and all very much.